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SENATE

{
REPORT
No. 467

AUTHORIZING THE ACQUISITION OF CERTAIN LANDS WITHIN THE BOUNDARIES OF THE UINTA NATIONAL FOREST IN THE STATE OF UTAH BY THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE

JULY 19, 1965.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. Moss, from the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
submitted the following

REPORT

[To accompany S. 1764]

The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1764) to authorize the acquisition of certain lands within the boundaries of the Uinta National Forest in the State of Utah by the Secretary of Agriculture, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with amendments and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

AMENDMENTS

On page 1, line 9, after the word "acquire" insert "at not to exceed the fair market value as determined by him".

On page 2, line 15, after the word "exceed" insert "\$300,000".

PURPOSE

The bill concerns itself with an area of approximately 10,000 acres located in the drainage of the South Fork of the Provo River, and intermingled or surrounded by national forest, and which would be used to promote flood control and to halt soil erosion. The South Fork drainage is the main source of domestic water for the city of Provo, and the city proposes to purchase 1,000 acres of bottomland to prevent pollution and to develop park and recreation facilities.

Also provided by the bill would be management, protection, and use of the acquired lands under multiple use and sustained yield as national forest lands.

CONCLUSION

Since some of the lands to which S. 1764 would apply have recently been placed on the market by the long-time owner, the committee

feels there is some urgency for their acquisition and unanimously recommends S. 1764.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

The favorable reports from the Department of Agriculture and the Bureau of the Budget are set forth below:

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
Washington, D.C., June 9, 1965.

HON. HENRY M. JACKSON,
Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
U.S. Senate.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This responds to your request of April 12, 1965. We are glad to furnish the following report on S. 1764, a bill to authorize the acquisition of certain lands within the boundaries of the Uinta National Forest in the State of Utah by the Secretary of Agriculture.

We recommend enactment of this bill.

S. 1764 would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to acquire those nonfederally owned lands within a described part of the Uinta National Forest for the purposes of promoting the control of floods and the reduction of soil erosion through restoration of adequate vegetative cover. The bill also would provide for the management, protection, and use of the acquired lands under principles of multiple use and sustained yield as national forest lands and would authorize appropriation of funds to carry out the objectives of the bill.

The lands to which S. 1764 would apply comprise some 11,000 acres located almost entirely in the drainage of the South Fork of the Provo River within the Uinta National Forest. They are intermingled with or surrounded by lands now owned by the United States and administered for national forest purposes. The national forest lands are generally situated in the higher and more rugged elevations. The private lands have high public values for watershed purposes and the production of water for domestic, industrial, and irrigation purposes; for wildlife habitat and game and fish production; for outdoor recreation of the more extensive types such as hunting, fishing, riding, and hiking; and for domestic livestock grazing.

The South Fork of the Provo River is a mountainous watershed, rough and rugged except for limited areas along the stream bottoms. Elevations range from 5,500 feet to nearly 11,000 feet above sea level. Slopes up to 70 percent occur, and the average is between 35 and 40 percent. Stream bottoms generally are narrow, and ridgetops are sharp. Soils are shallow, gravelly clay on the slopes with somewhat deeper soils of alluvial clay loam on the more level bottom lands. The South Fork drainage is the main source of domestic water supply for the city of Provo. It also contributes to the flow of the Provo River which is otherwise used for irrigation and industrial purposes.

The major part of the lands to which S. 1764 is applicable is in shrub or sagebrush and grass types. There is a substantial acreage of aspen at the higher elevations and somewhat over 1,000 acres of coniferous timber. Some 500 acres are stream bottom lands having potential for public recreational development. The stands of coniferous timber have been heavily cut over. In the open basins and on southern exposures much of the original native cover has given way to annual grasses and weeds. Stream bottom lands are composed of

grassy openings interspersed with cottonwood, boxelder, and other streamside species.

These lands have been used for grazing domestic livestock for many years. A gradual attrition of the more desirable plant species and a materially reduced density of the ground cover on steep slopes has resulted in sheet erosion and numerous small active gullies. Most of the tributary drainages show gully erosion with active cutting along the steeper portions. Deposits of silt and debris of recent origin indicate watershed deterioration.

Some 10,000 acres of the lands to which S. 1764 would apply have recently been placed on the market by the long-time owner. There is much local concern that their sale may bring about intensive development of the bottomlands for purposes which could result in contamination of city water supplies. Also, fragmentation of ownership could lead to additional overgrazing of the uplands with consequent accelerated deterioration of the watershed.

Necessary restoration of vegetative cover and management of these lands for watershed, forage production, wildlife, and recreation uses can be effectively coordinated with the present Forest Service programs. Their management could be efficiently integrated with that of the surrounding and intermingled national forest land by the Forest Service organization already in place.

If the lands are acquired, it will be necessary to limit and, in some places, perhaps exclude grazing for varying periods of time in order to allow for reestablishment or recovery of the natural vegetative cover. Some watershed improvement work such as artificial reseedling may also be necessary. We believe that the necessary rehabilitation work can be accomplished largely through intensified land management.

Section 3 of the bill does not specify the appropriation limitation in dollars. The city of Provo has proposed that it purchase approximately 1,000 acres of the land situated along stream bottoms and near surfaced roads. Sales of comparable lands indicate that the land which would be acquired by this Department for national forest purposes would cost not in excess of \$300,000.

The Bureau of the Budget has advised that there is no objection to the presentation of the report from the standpoint of the administration's program.

Sincerely yours,

ORVILLE L. FREEMAN, *Secretary.*

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,
BUREAU OF THE BUDGET,
Washington, D.C., June 7, 1965.

HON. HENRY M. JACKSON,
Chairman, Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs,
U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: This is in response to your request for the views of the Bureau of the Budget on S. 1764, a bill to authorize the acquisition of certain lands within the boundaries of the Uinta National Forest in the State of Utah by the Secretary of Agriculture.

S. 1764 would authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to acquire lands within the boundaries of the Uinta National Forest. The area described in the bill comprises 11,000 acres, of which the city of Provo

has proposed to purchase approximately 1,000 acres. Most of the remaining acreage which has high watershed values would be acquired by the Secretary of Agriculture for multiple use management by the Forest Service at a cost of not in excess of \$300,000, based on present land values.

There would be no objection from the standpoint of the administration's program to the enactment of this bill.

Sincerely yours,

PHILLIP S. HUGHES,
Assistant Director for Legislative Reference.

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